

The Arlington Advocate

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SERVING THE RESIDENTS OF ARLINGTON SINCE 1872

THURSDAY, January 28, 1993

RECYCLING ROUTE THIS WEEK

NEWS

■ Third quarter real estate and personal property tax bills are due on Monday, Feb. 1.

This is the second year of the quarterly tax billing. Unlike a semi-annual billing system, those individuals late in making payments will only have to pay interest on the actual number of days payments remain delinquent.

The treasurer's office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Offices are located on the first floor of town hall.

Mailed payments must be received by Feb. 1, and taxpayers are reminded to leave enough time for payments to arrive at the treasurer's office.

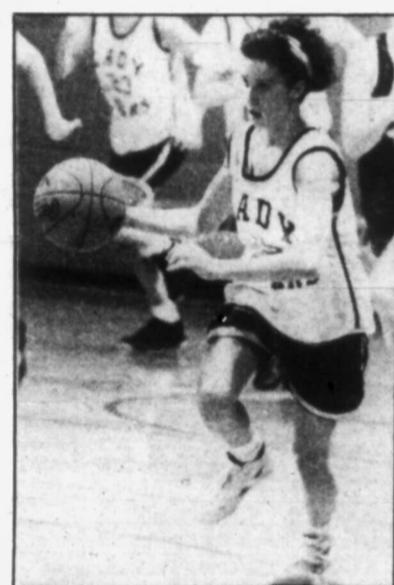
Those with questions should call the treasurer's office at 646-1000.

Fourth quarter bills will be sent out in March, with payment due May 1.

ELECTION NEWS

■ The Advocate continues its traditional policy of printing statements from candidates for town offices. Election news and comment, page 1A, 2A, and 10A.

SPORTS



■ Kristen Zero of Arlington Catholic brings the basketball up the floor. For more sports, please see B-section. (Advocate photo by Dennis Stein.)

EDUCATION NEWS

■ Town planner Alan McClellan will participate in talks with the groups that now use the former Parmenter and Crosby Schools regarding continued tenancy.

■ Ecole Bilingue, one of the tenants at Parmenter, is considering other locations that offer more space, but school's head says it is likely they will remain at the present location.

■ More education news, pages 4A, 5A, and 6A.

COMING EVENTS

■ Bibi the gorilla turns 40. Local children are invited to a party at the Franklin Park Zoo.

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32 pages, 2 sections

Harte-Hanks
Community Newspapers

Symmes Hospital making full recovery



By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

Symmes Hospital made more money than it spent last year, hospital officials announced this week. In its second year out of bankruptcy, Symmes posted a \$4,954,600 surplus of revenues over expenses.

The announcement was made at Symmes' annual meeting Tuesday night at the Brookhaven retirement facility in Lexington.

But, officials also said, Symmes' fiscal soundness, and the quality of its patient care alone will not help it survive in the competitive healthcare marketplace. Outside help — potentially in the form of Burlington-based Lahey Clinic — is needed.

"Two or three years ago you could go to any hospital you wanted to," said William F. Flynn Jr., medical staff president for Symmes, at the hospital's annual meeting. "That's all changed. You can't survive on excellence alone now."

According to Symmes Hospital President and Chief Executive Officer David Speltz, a decision on an affiliation with the Lahey Clinic has not been reached.

"We have a next step to take, which is being a part of a new system" Speltz said in a recent interview. "But we haven't got an agreement yet. We're working on one that will please everyone and maintain the integrity of Symmes Hospital."

But, Speltz said, "we have gone as far as we think we can go with Symmes as a stand-alone hospital."

SYMMES, See page 16A

THE VIEW FROM SYMMES

Symmes Hospital President David Speltz says the changing healthcare landscape means taking a new look at the role of the community hospital. For an Advocate Q. & A. with Speltz, see page 8.

ADVOCATE PHOTO BY ART ILLMAN

Town workers reject offer; contract talks reach impasse

By Dave Denison
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

The town's largest union voted last week to reject a new contract offer, leading to a standoff between the union and the town's bargaining agents.

Town manager Don Marquis informed the Board of Selectmen Monday that Local 680 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) rejected the town's latest offer by a 137-60 vote on Friday. "It wasn't even close," Marquis said. "It was worse than the last time, even though we increased our offer somewhat."

Local 680 represents more than 200 town employees, including laborers in the Public Works Dept. and town clerical workers. Union President Robert Cullinane was not available for comment at Advocate press time. Union treasurer Eddie Walsh said he had no comment.

Contract negotiations have been underway for several months, with the assistance of a state mediator.

Marquis told Selectmen there is no money available to give town employees as much of a raise as they are requesting. "We're not going to be increasing our offer," he said.

He also said, "I have my own ideas

as to why it was voted down, but I'd rather not say that in open session."

After the meeting, Marquis commented that one of the factors that may be slowing the contract discussions down is that town workers want raises similar to the ones granted to School Dept. employees by the School Committee.

Marquis and Town Counsel John Maher negotiate on behalf of the town with the eight unions that represent town workers other than school employees. Marquis said he intends to press ahead with talks with the other unions, which include police and fire associations and library workers.

Selectman blasts school deficit

By Dave Denison and
E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITERS

Selectman Charles Lyons launched a broadside Monday night at the management of Arlington's schools, which face a budget deficit in excess of \$300,000 halfway through the current fiscal year.

"We cannot run a deficit," Lyons said emphatically at a Board of Selectmen's meeting Monday night. "We have to live within our means."

Lyons said he had been informed at a meeting with school officials last

week that the School Dept. budget might come up short by as much as \$374,000. "I think it's a situation where we've got to ask the controller to go over there and find out exactly where those numbers come from."

At a School Committee meeting Tuesday school officials acknowledged the existence of a budget deficit of \$314,000. They said escalating special education costs were to blame for the shortfall.

"That's something we have less control over than other areas."

DEFICIT, See page 6A

Two candidates vie for Treasury

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

(First in a series of Advocate reports on this spring's town election.)

With Massachusetts towns and cities still scrambling to make ends meet in spite of an apparent upswing in the economy, this year's campaign for the office of town treasurer already is focusing on plans for Arlington's financial future and who can best implement a successful fiscal strategy for the town.

Pointing to his years of experience as the town's chief financial officer, Treasurer John Bilafer states that he has faithfully served the town of Arlington for more than two decades.

"I have to feel that my record works in my favor," Bilafer said. "I think I've been very candid with the people in town, and I've taken some tough stances."

But challenger Bruce Wright insists the length of Bilafer's tenure is the central problem with the treasurer's office, and he says long-term incumbency should be rooted out of the town.

"I think anybody that's been in office for 20 years has been in there too long," Wright says. "I think the treasurer's office has to be brought out of the dark ages and into the pre-

sent ... and the future."

Differences of opinion on the way to collect taxes for Arlington, along with different styles and personalities, will likely be at the crux of this year's campaign for a position that has not been contested since Bilafer took over the job in 1972.

"I'm in an elective office. Anyone in an elective office has to expect to be contested," Bilafer said in a recent interview.

But while both candidates agree that competition will be good for the town, similarities between the two seem to end there.

To Bilafer, who served as an Arlington selectman for eight years before winning the job of treasurer, the fiscal soundness of Arlington and prompt tax collection procedures highlight his success in public office.

"I think the financial stability of the town and its financial reputation is something that I would point to as an achievement," Bilafer said. "People laugh at this, but the deterioration in a community starts when the people on Wall Street lower your (bond) rating."

"The town has maintained its financial position," he said.

Arlington has kept its AA rating from Moody's Financial Services for the past several years in the midst of the downgrading of other commun-

ties in the area.

The town has also received consistently high marks in other areas from national analysts.

Bilafer also points to the need for Arlington to secure greater financial resources for itself in light of fewer available state dollars.

"There has to be some constructive thinking as to how that can be done in Arlington" in order to lift some of the burden on taxpayers, he said.

Asked if his difficulty in collecting large amounts of delinquent taxes in a few highly publicized instances — such as in the case of Thomas True, the owner of the Reeds Brook dump site — will hurt his chances of re-election, Bilafer said that such problems are few and far between.

"I think we've got one of the best collection records in the commonwealth," Bilafer said.

Bilafer, who works as a deputy tax collector for Urban Tax Services, Inc. in Arlington — a private firm that contracts with cities and towns to collect special taxes — feels things have to change if the town is to make noticeable progress and that different methods of tax collection are mandatory.

"I have a difference of opinion on how that office should be run,"

TREASURER, See page 16A

Gunning for Gold

Boxer packs Golden Glove punch

By Christopher G. Calnan
SPECIAL TO THE ADVOCATE

The Irish are known for being good-natured yet pugnacious. Brendan Gormley, Jr. is both.

The 21-year-old Arlington resident is an amateur middleweight boxer now training for two upcoming tournaments. In addition to a fine right hand, Gormley possesses a ready smile and an easy laugh. He's also fiercely proud of his Irish heritage.

Gormley, of Ottawa Road, is the son of Brendan and Margaret, from the Irish counties of Longford and Laois, respectively.

"To be an Irish fighter makes me proud because the Irish have such a great tradition of fighters," he said.

Gormley's athletic hero is the Olympic gold medalist, Ireland's Michael Carruth, and his ultimate goal is to compete in his parent's homeland — which, in a way, he considers his home, too.

"One thing I'd love to do is fight in Ireland — in front of the home crowd," Gormley said.

BOXER, See page 16A

A year and a half ago, Gormley, a former football and basketball player at Arlington High School, accompanied a friend to the Boston Sport Boxing Club. A few months later he qualified for the finals of the New England Golden Gloves Tournament in Lowell. He lost in the finals but is presently training two hours a day, six days a week, hoping for a better outcome this year. He currently has a 4-1 record.

"I hope to take the Golden Gloves one step further this year to win," he said. "I feel I've improved a lot and this year I know what to expect."

The qualifying rounds of the Golden Gloves take place at the Lowell Memorial Auditorium every Tuesday night through the month of January, concluding in February. Gormley won his first qualifying bout last Tuesday by defeating Paul Duffy of Woburn with a third-round technical knockout. After the Golden Gloves, he intends to compete in the Diamond Belt Tournament in Somerville in March.

"I have a difference of opinion on how that office should be run,"

TREASURER, See page 16A

INSIDE ARLINGTON

Warrant process begins

With the Jan. 25 deadline for submitting town warrant articles now past, the process of taking the articles and making a warrant out of them for Town Meeting now begins.

Over the last few weeks, town boards and committees have discussed what the content of their articles for the warrant should be.

Public hearings will now be held on each article prior to inclusion in the warrant. Boards and committees will hear testimony from the public on each article, then vote on whether or not to recommend each article.

No more articles may be submitted for inclusion in the town warrant for the Town Meeting. However, other issues may be included in a Special Town Meeting, separate from the regular session of Town Meeting.

Officials have indicated that such a session is a possibility, depending upon the outcome of contract negotiations between the town and several of its unions, among other matters.

According to town officials, the usual budgetary concerns, zoning issues and questions about town policies will constitute a good portion of the Town Meeting warrant.

But there are several issues that officials predict may stir up controversy at the yearly legislative session. The following is a wrap-up of some of those articles.

For the Redevelopment Board, several articles may cause debate, including one about acquiring the former Reeds Brook dump site. The Redevelopment Board was charged last year by Town Meeting to study the possibility of acquiring the property for the town. Debate centered around whether or not acquisition of the property, once used as a municipal landfill, would handicap the town legally.

Other Redevelopment Board articles include ones regarding the

definition of "commercial vehicles"; the paving of parking spaces; and the definition of "half story."

Other zoning articles will round out the Redevelopment Board's portion of the warrant.

The Board of Selectmen also has submitted several articles that could prove controversial.

According to Town Counsel John Maher, potentially volatile issues may include the following:

- a request to permit overnight parking on town streets;
- a potential early retirement plan for both school and town employees;
- a bylaw amendment prohibiting smoking in all public buildings;
- a recommendation to reduce the size of the School Committee from nine to five;
- and a bylaw change regarding the permissibility of yard sales.

As well, collective bargaining and budget articles have been submitted by selectmen, Maher said.

For the Conservation Commission, according to Dorothy Maher, the following articles have been submitted:

- a recommendation that the commission acquire a wetland area now owned by Liberty Baptist Church.
- According to Maher, a decision about that land, adjacent to Reeds Brook, hinges on an action taken on the nearby landfill;
- and to accept two land gifts of open space: one at Stone Road and one near Central Street.

Information on other articles was not available by The Advocate's press deadline, but officials will continue to work to assemble the warrant over the next few months.

to come to meet Paulsen, to let her know about concerns they have, or to ask for help on legislation or in dealing with state agencies. There will also be an office hour on the first Friday of each month at the Fox Library in East Arlington.

The first Arlington sessions will be on Wednesday, Feb. 3, from 7-8 p.m. and on Friday, Feb. 5, from 1-2 p.m. Dates for the remainder of the year will be announced each month.

On other days, Paulsen can be reached at the Statehouse, Room A2, Boston, MA 02133 or by calling 722-2800, Ext. 7311.

Political party to be held at Parmenter

The first "Parmenter Political Party" will be held at Parmenter School, 17 Irving St., on Friday, Feb. 12, from 8 to 10 p.m., the Parmenter School Neighborhood Association announced today.

Gerard J. Gagnon, chairman of the association's steering committee, said all town meeting member candidates from Precincts 8 and 10, and all candidates for town-wide offices, are invited.

Gagnon said the event will give voters and candidates a chance to meet face-to-face. There will be no political speeches or debates, he said, but musical entertainment and refreshments will be offered.

The event is being presented with the cooperation and support of the Arlington Children's Center and Ecole Bilingue, which are located in the former public elementary school.

Beacon Hill Roll Call



Sen. Havern



Rep. Marzilli



Rep. Gibson

Volume 19 — Report No. 56
Massachusetts House and Senate
Jan. 22, 1993

THE HOUSE AND SENATE

SENATE. Beacon Hill Roll Call records local senators' votes on three roll calls and local representatives' votes on one roll call from the final two days of the 1992 session. There were no roll calls in the House or Senate last week.

FEDERAL FACILITY (H 6352) — Senate 35-0, House 143-0, approved a \$100 million bond issue to acquire and renovate a site and all necessary facilities for establishment by the federal government of a U.S. Department of Defense Financing and Accounting Service Facility in the town of Southbridge.

The bonds would be issued only if Southbridge is chosen as the site by a federal commission.

Supporters said the bill is necessary as part of the state's bid to locate this project in Southbridge. They noted if the facility is located in Massachusetts, hundreds of jobs will be created and millions of dollars in state revenues will be generated. The Governor signed the bill on Jan. 14.

A Yes vote is for the bond issue bill. A No vote is against it.

Rep. Mary Jane Gibson voted yes.

Rep. Jim Marzilli did not vote.

Sen. Robert Havern voted yes.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION (H 6319)

— Senate 23-15, favored but failed to gain the two-thirds margin necessary to take immediate action on the bill restructuring the three-member committee which oversees the deferred compensation/retirement plan for state workers. The bill increases the membership to seven and requires an open bidding process. The committee is now headed by Republican Treasurer Joe Malone. Bill supporters said this bill will open up the process, provide more input and accountability and put an end to the unfair practice of no-bid contracts. Opponents said

both branches are expected to vote the week of Jan. 24 on the important rules under which each branch will operate for the next two years.

A special committee has been designated to report to the House floor by the end of next month a bill revising the state's lead paint laws.

Lawmakers are trying to balance the need to protect children from lead paint poisoning with the financial hardships such laws create.

The House is expected to consider the latest version of a public education reform bill during the week of Jan. 24. The bill never made it through the 1992 session. The Senate has indicated it will act quickly on the bill if it passes the House.

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would hold some form of event for candidates, particularly for those running for town meeting seats. He urged the chairmen of other precincts to plan such events.

"Arlington's representative town meeting system of government provides great opportunities for people to have a direct voice in how the town is run," Gagnon said. "Sadly, many seats are not filled during the local election. If annual events for candidates are held in each precinct, people may take more interest in running for town meeting."

older are invited to the Hardy School Gym on Saturday, Jan. 30, at 10:30 a.m., to listen to Ramona Bass, a New England storyteller. The Robbins Library invites the public to share in the celebration of Black History Month with a program of stories from the black tradition.

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Booklet & Save! Save! it's like money in the bank!

To purchase space in the Coupon Booklet Call your sales rep. before February 5th.

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Meetings

Thursday, Jan. 28

The Arlington Contributory Retirement Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the retirement office at Arlington High School (Room 102).

The School Department's Infrastructure Study Committee will meet at 7:45 p.m. at the Ottoson Junior High School.

Tuesday, Feb. 2

The School Committee will have a special meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the sixth floor hearing room at Arlington High School. A presentation entitled "Treatment of Religious Differences in the Public Schools" will be given.

Wednesday, Feb. 3

The Registrars of Voters will hold a special meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the town hall auditorium for the purpose of drawing, by lot, the order of all candidates on this year's local election of March 6.

Two Vision 2020 task groups are scheduled to meet. The Business Task Group will meet at 7 p.m. at the Jefferson Cutter House. The Governance Task Group will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the planning department hearing room on the first floor of the town hall annex.

CABLE TV

Thursday, Jan. 28

6 a.m. Continental Aerobics

9 a.m. Continental Aerobics

3:30 p.m. Extra Credit LIVE

5 p.m. Video Shortcuts

5:30 p.m. Another Comedy Show

6 p.m. Community TV Update

6:30 p.m. Runners Journal

7 p.m. State House Report

7:30 p.m. Town Hall Topics

8 p.m. The Missing Tooth

8:30 p.m. Beyond the Classroom

9 p.m. Living Unlimited

10 p.m. Continental Aerobics

11 p.m. Arlington Philharmonic

Friday, Jan. 29:

9 a.m. Continental Aerobics

10 a.m. Golden Opportunities

10:30 a.m. Customer Connection

11 a.m. Guitar 101

11:30 a.m. Community TV Update

12 p.m. Cable Cuisine

12:30 p.m. Quilt with Marnie

1 p.m. School Committee Meeting

5 p.m. The Film Show

5:30 p.m. Arlington Educational Forum

6 p.m. Companion Animal Medicine

6:30 p.m. Hal Koltin Show

7 p.m. Video Fanzine

8 p.m. AHS Basketball vs Everett LIVE

10:30 p.m. The Front Page

Saturday, Jan. 30:

9:30 a.m. The Front Page

10:30 a.m. The Missing Tooth

11 a.m. Talking Sports

12 p.m. The Film Show

12:30 p.m. AHS Basketball vs Peabody (R)

3 p.m. AHS Hockey vs Everett LIVE

6 p.m. Living Unlimited

7 p.m. AHS Hockey vs Marian LIVE

12 a.m. Another Comedy Show

12:30 a.m. Forever Baseball

LIBRARY NEWS

Storyteller will entertain kids

Children of Kindergarten age and

older are invited to the Hardy School Gym on Saturday, Jan. 30, at 10:30 a.m., to listen to Ramona Bass, a New England storyteller. The Robbins Library invites the public to share in the celebration of Black History Month with a program of stories from the black tradition.

The Arlington Advocate

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580 Winter St., Waltham, MA 02454

Pleasant Street Choral Concerts presents

Harvard Glee Club

Lite

Sunday, Feb. 7th at 4:00PM

Advance Tickets \$3.00 (cash or charge)

at Wood & Strings, Arlington Center (617-2131)

At the Door \$4.00 (cash only)

Pleasant Street Congregational Church

75 Pleasant Street, Arlington

Back Talk

by Dr. N. Richard Archambault

Chiropractic Physician

THE ARTHRITIC BACK

Osteoarthritis ("wear-and-tear" arthritis) is one of the most common conditions treated in our office. It is characterized by a dull, nagging ache in the lower back or neck which often results in stiffness and pain. It is most noticeable at night and upon awakening in the morning. Osteoarthritis occurs most often as the result of degeneration or thinning of the discs between the vertebrae of the spine. As a result of the degenerative discs, the gliding joints (facets) of the vertebrae undergo weight bearing changes and often become misaligned. Chiropractors are professionally trained in the correction of spinal misalignment so as to restore normal function and mobility.

Chiropractic is the science which concerns itself with the relationship between structure (primarily the spine) and function (primarily the nervous system) of the human body, as that relationship may affect the restoration and preservation of health. At my office, located at 9 Chestnut Street (across from St. Agnes Church) in Arlington, our concern is the cause of your problem, not simply the short-term alleviation of symptoms. Call 646-8400 for an appointment.

ARLINGTON NEWS

Debate continues on future use of Regent

By E.H. Stockstill

ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

Chances seemed to dim this week

of the Regent Theatre being converted to a Gold's Gym. But a new proposal has come to light: an Arlington Athletic Club is being proposed by the theater owner.

Spirited and at times heated debate over increased traffic, the safety of school children and the need for new business in the town's center punctuated a public hearing Monday on a proposal to turn the historic Medford Street movie house into a fitness center.

According to those involved with the current Regent proposal, the licensing rights to the Gold's name are held by a Boston-based Gold's.

Those at the Boston Gold's Gym,

however,

have reportedly shown

interest in a Park Avenue site for a

full-sized fitness center.

Regent owner Richard Sacco has

proposed to revamp his theater as a

health club, and the operators of

Gold's facilities in Woburn and

Braintree have shown interest in the

idea. They told residents and

Redevelopment Board members Monday

night that their intention is to bring a

small, neighborhood fitness center

— to be called "The Arlington

Athletic Club" — to the Regent site.

"We're not coming in to Arlington

to crowd people," said David Laird,

who operates the Woburn Gold's

Gym. "We're coming to provide a

service to the town."

But while the petitioners and some

business proprietors in town said

that a new fitness center at the

Medford Street site would help revitalize

Arlington Center, others argued that

such a use does not belong in that

area of town. Concerns about noise

levels, pedestrian safety, public morals

and duplicated services were

voiced by residents at the hearing.

Arlington already has one health

club, Fitness First on Mass.

Avenue. It is locally owned and operated.

According to Laird and Scott Baker,

who run a Gold's fitness center in

Braintree, the proposed center at the

Regent would not be called Gold's

Gym.

But they also said that the Gold's

name has lost some of its negative

connotations over the years.

"This doesn't have the stigma of a

body building club because we don't

represent ourselves as a body building

club. We're a health club," Baker

said of the Gold's organization.

Gold's Gym Enterprises is based in

Venice, Calif.

Individual Gold's facilities are

independently owned and operated.

There currently are close to 20 such

facilities in Massachusetts.

The Arlington Athletic Club would

be about a third of the size of a normal

Gold's Gym, Baker said. Baker

also said members of the club would

also be allowed to use the Woburn

and Braintree facilities.

According to Laird, traffic would

not adversely affect the center of

town. He said it would encourage

business, help residents stay fit,

while not creating an undue amount

of traffic.

But Redevelopment Board member

Doris Cremens said she wanted

more information on traffic changes

before she made her decision.

"I don't think we can just assume

that the center and the municipal lot

will accommodate the numbers

Study of town schools continues

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

you've projected," Cremens said about the traffic projection presented by Laird. "We have to assess this carefully."

Larry Cronin, who owns Fitness First, said the new fitness center would greatly increase activity in the area.

"There is no way this health club could have a less intensive use than the theater. These are professionals. They know what they're doing. They're good at it," he said.

Cronin also indicated that the presence of another facility would hurt business in the long run because the town could not support both of them.

Opposition from Arlington Catholic High School and the Fidelity house was also voiced during the meeting.

But Richard Sacco, the Regent's owner, came to the defense of his prospective tenants.

"If this is any indication of how you're going to run Arlington Athletic Club, I'm very proud to have you as my tenants," he said.

"Why do businesses not want to come to Arlington? Who is discouraging them?" Sacco asked. "Other towns welcome with open arms new business. We need change in Arlington, because new business will not wait for Arlington."

At issue also was whether or not the theater's marquee would have to be removed if the conversion did take place. According to Planning Director Alan McClenen Jr., the conversion from a theater to a health club would necessitate its removal.

Monday night's hearing was continued until Feb. 8, when a final decision is expected.

There currently are no plans to shut down any of Arlington's public schools, an architect involved with a current study of the town's schools said recently.

"We're looking at all the options," said Roger Hoit, with Hingham-based Strelakovsky and Hoit, the architectural firm paid \$100,000 by Arlington to analyze its public school infrastructure.

"No decisions have been made yet. No preliminary recommendations have been given," Hoit said in an interview.

But there has been recent speculation that a number of schools in Arlington are specifically slated to be closed because of low student population and inadequate facilities.

Hoit dismissed such speculation as "really premature."

While specifics still aren't available on the infrastructure work, those involved in the work agree, there is also widespread belief that proposals to change the way Arlington's children are educated may surface in the next few months.

Along with an architectural analysis, an Infrastructure Study Committee, composed of various town and school officials, has followed the Strelakovsky and Hoit work step by step over the last year.

The study of Arlington's school plant involves a thorough analysis of its physical infrastructure and the ways that school facilities affect learning, Hoit said. Proposals for the town's schools could involve facility closings and mergers, but they don't necessarily have to, he said.

According to Alan McClenen Jr., the town's planning director and a

member of the infrastructure group, the benefits of all potential suggestions for the Arlington system are still being weighed. But he indicated during a recent interview that there will probably be some changes recommended for Arlington's schools. He also said that those changes may be different than some expected by parents, students and school activists.

"I firmly believe that when the study is done, all the information will be available to allow the Arlington School Department and the Arlington administration to decide what is the most appropriate use for the space they have. The town will be able to understand what the real options are."

According to Hoit, coming up with actual proposals isn't the hard part: the funding is.

"That's the real challenge," he said.

Arlington's School Department currently faces a reported deficit in excess of \$300,000 for this fiscal year.

"I think it's a tremendous opportunity for the town to take a look at the school's buildings and the goals and commitments of the school system," said Michael McCabe, principal of the Thompson School and a

member of the Infrastructure Study Committee. "It raises its importance to a townwide issue."

None involved would provide specifics on particular schools, but McClenen did say that "It is clear in my mind that we have a mismatch between the capital plan of the school plant and the programmatic needs of our system."

The question, he said, is: "How can we take these and use them for 21st century education?"

Hoit dismissed the idea that a large number of schools will be closed in order to save money and streamline education procedures.

"We're not going to see wholesale closings," he said.

School officials currently are predicting an influx of an estimated 113 additional students into the system next year.

The School Department has the final decision on any changes to be made to the town's school plant after proposals are brought before them in public session.

Arlington currently has seven elementary schools, one junior high school and one high school. Approximately 3,778 are enrolled in those public schools, an increase of around 48 over last year.

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Louise Ivers says that houses that are in mint condition sell faster and usually for a higher price than houses that are not in tip-top condition. Your property will sell faster and for a better price if you follow these helpful suggestions.

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2. CLEAR IT OUT. Eliminate "overcrowding" conditions in the house, the porch, or garage. Otherwise, the buyer will feel the property has inadequate space.

3. FIX IT UP. Make all minor repairs to sticking doors, leaky plumbing, broken light switches, and scaling paint.

4. TIE UP THE DOG. If you have a dog, keep him out of the house and under control. Many buyers are afraid of dogs.

5. TURN IT OFF. Turn off or tone down the radio or television set. They serve as annoying distractions.

6. LET YOUR REALTOR DO IT. Let your Realtor show the property. The Realtor is well trained for the job and knows the customer best. Questions about price and terms should be referred to the Realtor. If asked questions about the house and neighborhood, answer directly and honestly.

If you have any questions about real estate, call Ivers & Stein Realtors at 339 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, 648-6500.

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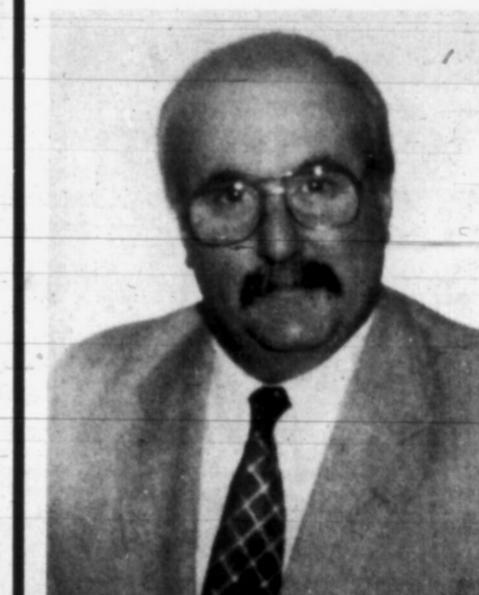
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FOR SELECTMAN

VOTE: MARCH 6, 1993

Paid for by the Committee to Elect John M. McKenna

CORRECTION

In the Advocate for Jan. 21, a news story incorrectly reported the occupation of School Committee candidate Jacqueline Harrington. She describes her work as that of a "mother and housewife."



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EDUCATION



ADVOCATE PHOTO BY TODD MAGLIOZZI

Wes Sanders and Carl Weiting perform at the Dearborn Academy in a presentation on rediscovering the discovery of Columbus.

Theater troupe takes kids on journey backward in time

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

Imagine a giant space ship landing in your neighborhood and men in silver space suits filing out to explore a new and fascinating world.

That's how the members of the local Underground Railway Theater troupe explained Christopher Columbus's 15th Century arrival on the American continent Tuesday to students and teachers at the former Gibbs School.

The performance — "1492 to 1992: Rediscovering the Discovery" — was part of a month-long "Artist-in-Residence" program for the Dearborn Academy, funded by a \$2500 corporate grant.

"We always get to see the Indians through the eyes of Columbus," said

one of the players, dressed in an Indian outfit, to his audience. "How would you like to see Columbus through the eyes of the Indians?"

Dearborn Academy, part of the Schools for Children program, is a state-approved private school serving special needs students ages six to 22.

According to Development Assistant Diane Lordan, the "Artist-in-Residence" program is designed to bring local artists into contact with students.

Along with the Underground Railway, Boston-based visual artist Johnetta Tinker has also led students in a number of art sessions, including fabric-painting. The theater troupe has conducted classes in puppetry for students, as well.

According to art teacher Linda

Graetz, the program has been a great opportunity for the students.

"It's like building a community arts link," Graetz said. "To bring anyone in is validating. It gives students a sense of belonging."

"The arts are one way they achieve success and express themselves successfully," she said.

According to Schools for Children Executive Director Ted Wilson: "The idea of bringing in visiting artists is very attractive. It's supplemental work."

The grant money, intended to be apportioned for a not-for-profit, child-related use, was provided by the Ronald McDonald Children's Charities.

Schools for Children, Inc. operates both the Dearborn Academy and Lesley Ellis School in Arlington.

ship — any student interested in a career in graphic arts.

Mass Elks Scholarship — Deadline is Feb. 8. Instructions and sign up sheet in main guidance.

ESPN Scholastic Sports America Scholarships — \$5,000 award to one male and one female student. Applications available in guidance.

Syrian-Lebanese Women's Club — \$1,000 scholarship. See details in box in Career Center.

Christa McAuliffe Scholarship — seven scholarships of \$1,000. Student must be planning to attend Framingham State. Deadline is March 5.

Sons of Italy Grand Lodge — Deadline is March 15. Instructions and applications in career center.

NEW — Sons of Italy (girls/boys) local scholarship. Sign up sheet in main guidance.

NEW — Rebekah Assembly — one scholarship of \$300. Deadline is March 10.

Mass Oilheat Council — one \$2,000; six \$1,000; six \$500. Deadline is April 1. Applications and instructions in Career Center.

Arlington Women's Club — two \$500 music awards; \$500 art award; \$600 education award; one \$500 for international study; scholarships for students planning to attend the Art Institute of Boston, Mt. Ida and Fisher College. Artists contest for 13 and 14 year olds. Application deadline is Jan. 29. See Ms. Gorman in Room 305.

NEW — Sons of Italy (girls/boys) local scholarship. Sign up sheet in main guidance.

NEW — Rebekah Assembly — one scholarship of \$300. Deadline is March 10.

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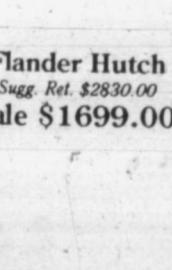
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Old schools likely to keep tenants

By E.H. Stockstill
ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER

The buildings that formerly housed the Crosby School and the Parmenter School will continue to be put to good use, town officials say.

Redevelopment Board members agreed to let Planning Director Alan McClenen Jr. this week "commence negotiations" with three tenants, although a final vote on Parmenter School tenancies has yet to be taken.

Currently, Ecole Bilingue, a French-English bilingual school, and the Arlington Center for Children, a daycare center, lease space at the Parmenter School.

Schools for Children, Inc., which operates several schools for special needs students, leases space at Crosby.

Both Ecole Bilingue and the Arlington Center for Children have presented proposals to the Redevelopment Board to acquire more space at Parmenter. But, according to McClenen, the schools will probably wind up continuing to share the school.

Both tenants have been there since 1983. Their leases expire this summer.

Officials involved in the process have also said that changes could be on the way for the tenants, and for the school department and the town, in the next several months, depending on the recommendations of the current infrastructure study on the town's public school system.

More space becoming available could mean one of the tenants might move, McClenen said.

Judy Brown Hull, head of Ecole Bilingue, told a group of parents at the school's open house Jan. 24, "Our lease is up at the end of the (school) year and it's more than likely we'll stay here." But she added that it will be about six weeks before they know whether the school will find additional space at a new location.

According to McClenen, Ecole Bilingue and the Arlington's Children Center both add a lot to the town.



ADVOCATE PHOTO BY DAVE DENISON

Jeffrey Louis, two years and ten months old, plays with a hula hoop at Ecole Bilingue as his parents look on. His father, Alix Louis, and mother Nola, live in Hyde Park and are originally from Haiti. They were drawn to the bilingual school because of a desire to raise their son to be fluent in English and French, Mr. Louis said.

"The board is not going to select one over the other because the town can't afford to lose either one of them. We have a tremendous number of tenants that add vibrancy to the community."

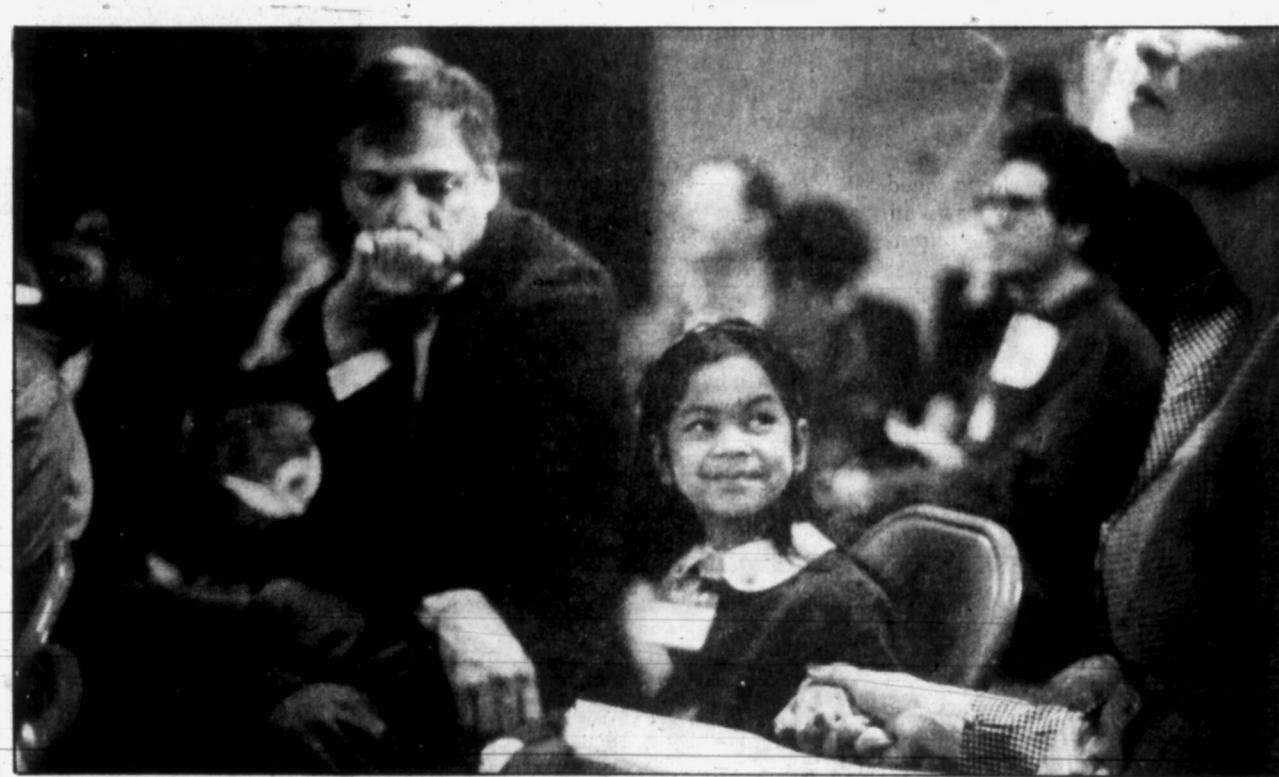
"I believe they are both significant assets to the town."

Neighbors from the area along with those from both Ecole and ACC showed up at a recent meeting last

week to voice their opinions on the subject. Among those concerns, addressed were traffic congestion and noise level.

But Redevelopment Board members seem to feel that the tenants at Parmenter are a good investment.

"We are looking for the most return on a very good use," said board member Doris Cremens. "We have to assure the use of all of our buildings to the highest degree."



ADVOCATE PHOTO BY DAVE DENISON

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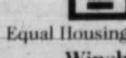
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EDUCATION

Libraries to receive new state atlas

School libraries throughout the state will receive a copy of "The Historical Atlas of Massachusetts" thanks to the University of Massachusetts and the state legislature, which approved funding to widely distribute the colorful compendium of commonwealth information.

The atlas, edited by University professors Jack Tager and Richard Wilkie, contains computer-generated maps accompanied by clearly written text tracking the political, social, and geographic trends in Massachusetts from the precolonial era to the present.

Published by the University of Massachusetts Press, the atlas contains old and new photographs, political cartoons, portraits, and paintings to bring Massachusetts history alive. Subjects covered, range from the average household radon level by county, notable Massachusetts women, and the origin of the names of Massachusetts towns and cities.

The atlases will be shipped to about 2,300 school libraries during

February.

University Chancellor Richard O'Brien presented copies of the atlas to Massachusetts Senate President William M. Bulger and Speaker of the House Charles F. Flaherty in December 1991. Bulger initiated the special appropriation to purchase the atlas for each school library. The House of Representatives and Gov. William Weld agreed to include funding in this year's budget.

History professor Tager is director of the department's undergraduate studies program, author of "The Intellectual as Urban Reformer: Brand Whitlock and the Progressive Movement," and co-editor of "The Urban Vision: Selected Interpretations of the Modern American City" and "Massachusetts in the Gilded Age."

Geography Professor Wilkie teaches seminars on geographic theory and analysis and migration. He is the author of "Latin American Urbanization Analysis: 1950-1982," and more than 50 articles and chapters.

children's problem solving capabilities, reinforcing strategies of assertiveness, peer support, and support from trusted adults.

Minuteman Tech to hold open house

Minuteman Tech will be holding an open house from noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 31. Parents and students are invited to tour the school and see how the latest technology is

used to teach everything from Biotechnology Manufacturing to Auto Mechanics to English and mathematics. Applications are now being accepted for September 1993 admission to grades nine, 10, and 11. The student-run gift shop, bakery, beauty salon and Fine & Drum Grill will be open. There will also be open swimming in the school's Olympic-size pool. Information will be available about the Adult High School, post-graduate and Adult Technical Training programs, summer school, Computer Camp and After School Courses. For information call 861-7150. Minuteman Tech is in Lexington, just west of the intersection of Routes 2A and 128. The open house date is Sunday, Feb. 7.

Registration open for study skills course

Registration is now being accepted for students: making the grade with study skills, a highly successful course offered at Minuteman Tech Evening School beginning Feb. 10. The class meets on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 9:30 p.m. for five weeks. This is an ideal course for students in grades eight through 12 who need to develop efficient, time saving, study techniques for mastering school subjects. Students learn strategies that improve listening, note taking, reading comprehension, memorizing, and test taking and much more.

Study skills are the great equalizer. They provide the missing link for bright, capable learners whose potential is not reflected in school grades. Furthermore, they demystify the learning process, thereby offering all students the means to become organized and confident learners.

Students learn how to make better use of time they spend studying and gain maximum understanding in and

out of class. Efficient techniques lead to improved grades and enjoyment in academics. This is the road to increased motivation and academic success.

The instructor, Roberta Wolman, is a full-time reading and learning disabilities specialist at Minuteman and a registered educational tutor with the Learning Disabilities Network in Rockland. She has been successful instructor of study skills for the past 17 years. In addition, Wolman is an expert in SAT preparation. She has served as a consultant and author in the field of education.

For more information call 861-7150. Minuteman Tech is in Lexington, just west of the intersection of Routes 2A and 128. The open house date is Sunday, Feb. 7.

Job-related courses available include computer aided drafting (using AutoCAD software), desktop publishing, Lotus 1-2-3, word processing, manicure licensing, basic refrigeration/residential air conditioning, and electronic test technician training.

For more information call 861-7150. Telephone registration is available with selected credit cards.

Arlington students on Matignon Honor Roll

Principal Gary R. LeFave has recognized the following Arlington students at Matignon High School for academic achievement in the first quarter:

Class of 1993, (second honors) Maureen Martin; (honors) Christopher Hardy, Matthew Healey, Lisa Rankin, Shane Ronan, Kristine Tenney;

Class of 1994, (honors) Kate Brosnan, Antonio Duarte, Michael Gaffey, Timothy Low, Tara Mannion, Juliet O'Mahoney;

Class of 1995, (second honors) Ste-

phen Scribner; (honors) Arti Georgopoulos, Michael Planomdon, Christopher Welch;

Class of 1996, (honors) Patricia Cigane, Maria Moisakis.

Scholarships are available for college

High school students with a "B" average or better and who are U.S. citizens interested in applying for \$1,000 college scholarships should request applications by March 15 from Educational Communications Scholarship Foundation, 721 N. McKinley Road, P.O. Box 5012, Lake Forest, IL 60045-5012.

To receive an application, students should send a note stating their name, address, city, state, zip code, approximate grade point average and year of graduation. All requests for applications will be fulfilled on or about April 15. One hundred winners will be selected on the basis of academic performance, involvement in extracurricular activities and some consideration for financial need.

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Evening classes set at Minuteman

Minuteman Tech in Lexington is now accepting registrations for more than 100 evening job training and personal interest courses.

Openings are still available in such areas as machine shop, typing, foreign languages, house construction, welding, accounting, basic drawing and photography.

VIEWPOINT REAL ESTATE

with Marie R. Monahan ARC, CRS, GRI

NEGOTIATING WITH THE SELLERS

One of the first questions many prospective buyers ask us when they find the perfect house in Belmont is "will they take less?" The agent cannot tell you what the sellers will take, and the only way to test their bottom line is to make an offer. If you can negotiate a lower price or better terms than the original offering, you may possibly save yourself some money, but you could risk losing a home you really love in the process.

If your offer is below the sellers' bottom line, they will probably make you a counter offer. If your bid is too low, you run the risk of offending them. Your offer may not be taken seriously - especially if it is far below market value.

Another risk is that while you and the sellers are trading offers and counter offers, another buyer may come in with a more attractive bid. If this happens before your negotiations are concluded, your sellers may accept the competing offer. Before you decide what kind of offer to make, weigh the benefits and risks of going in with a lower price than what the sellers are asking.

For other viewpoints, opinions or advice on buying or selling real estate call us at Hunneman & Company/Coldwell Banker-Belmont at 648-5300.

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- Coordinating selling and buying simultaneously
- Estates... how do they work?

Speakers: Steve Savarese, Vice President Century 21 Adams
Eugene Lucarelli, Arlington Real Estate Attorney
Place: Arlington Senior Center
27 Maple Street, Arlington, MA (behind Town Hall)
Date: March 9, 1993
Time: Registration 6:30 P.M. (program 7 - 9 P.M.)

For more information and directions please call
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Questions in Family Medicine



by Robert Kass, M.D.

Q: Why do doctors measure patients' cholesterol levels?
A: Research has shown that elevated levels of a certain type of cholesterol in the blood is associated with narrowing of the blood vessels that bring oxygen to the heart. This narrowing increases the likelihood of problems like angina and heart attacks later in life.

Many experts recommend checking cholesterol levels of all adults over 20, every five years. The new recommendations for testing children are based on a family history of high cholesterol or early-onset heart disease, stroke, or vascular disease.

In many cases, high blood cholesterol is lowered by changes in diet. Diet is most often the first step in treatment. In certain cases, if diet is not effective, then medication may be used.

If you have any other questions or health concerns, I am welcoming new patients to my practice in Arlington Center at 5 Water Street. You may make an appointment by calling (617) 643-2024.

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SENIOR NEWS

ARLINGTON SENIORS ASSOCIATION

Weekly programs

Sponsored by the Arlington Seniors Association, these programs are offered every week at the senior center. To join a class or group, call 646-1000, Ext. 4740 or 4743.

Monday, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. exercise; 1 to 4 p.m. contract bridge.

Tuesday, 10 a.m. to noon, writers' workshop; 10 to 11:15 a.m., beginning line dance with Charlie Kay.

Wednesday, 10 a.m. to noon, informal knitting; 1 to 4 p.m., contract bridge; 1 to 3 p.m., beano; 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. exercise.

Thursday, 9 to 11 a.m., square dance lessons; 10 a.m. to noon, senior forum; 1:15 to 2:30 p.m., line dance class.

Friday, 9 to 10:30 a.m., yoga; 1 to 4 p.m., contract bridge or other games and pool lessons.

Sunday Valentine Dance

Our Valentine Dance will be Sunday, Feb. 7. Dot and George will conduct the dancing. Daphne and Diane of "Unlimited Living" on Channel 3 are giving prizes of three mini-psychic readings. Refreshments will be served. Suggested donation is \$2.

Line dance for beginners

The basic steps of line dancing will be taught by Dottie and George every Thursday from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. The fee is \$2.50.

Cribbage

Cribbage instructions are available on Mondays at 1 p.m.

Sing along

Sing along with Frank and Lauria every second Tuesday of the month. Music by Julie Caulfield.

Senior overnight trips

April 12-15, Washington, D.C.: Four days, \$309 double occupancy. Six meals (three breakfasts, one luncheon, and two dinners). A Washington guide for the Capitol, White House, Embassy Row etc. Plenty of time for the Smithsonian Museums, accommodations at the new McLean Hilton Hotel. Deposit of \$25 is due by Feb. 20. Call Betty at 643-6143.

June 10, eight-day Mackinac Island Grand Hotel Tour: 12 meals are included in the price of \$999 per person double occupancy. Visits to Buffalo, Detroit, Henry Ford Museum, Mackinac Island (Grand Hotel), Frankenmuth Amish Country and Niagara Falls. Deposit of \$100 is due now. Cancellation insurance is available. Call Mary at 648-0311.

Day trips

March 24, Randolph - Irish Bash at Lantana's. Paddy Noonan and his Irish Variety Show: Paddy Noonan is directing the show and on the accordion. Choice of meal: baked Irish ham with raisin sauce or boiled Boston scrod. Entire package including meal, show and transportation via deluxe motor coach is \$38. Book early. Call 648-9018 on day trips.

ARLINGTON COUNCIL ON AGING

Dial-a-Ride

Important information

All Dial-A-Ride I.D. cards must be renewed by Jan. 1 for 1993. Come into the Council on Aging Office at the Senior Center, 27 Maple St. to renew your card. There will be \$2 fee. If you cannot come, call 646-1000, Ext. 4720.

New DART telephone number

To order a ride: As of Jan. 1, Dial-A-Ride services will be provided by Arlex Taxi Company. Call 648-1000 to make your reservation at least one day in advance. TDD 648-1003.

New rules for ride discount

Dial-a-ride, a federally funded, town-operated discount transportation program, offers rides for senior citizens and handicapped persons within the town limits of Arlington.

Any town resident who can document age of at least 60 and retired, or who is physically handicapped, can register for a Dial-A-Ride discount card. The annual card fee is \$2. To receive a card, register at the Council on Aging office at the Senior Center, 27 Maple St., Monday through Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call to order by mail.

Coupons in books of five or 10 can be purchased. While the new coupon system is being phased, in riders may continue to pay \$1.25 to the drivers. Participants may use up to 10 rides per month. For more information, call the Council on Aging at

646-1000. For the hearing impaired, TDD 648-8130.

Health counseling schedule

Thursday, Jan. 28, 1 to 2:30 p.m. at COA; Thursday, Feb. 4, 1 to 2:30 p.m. at COA; Tuesday, Feb. 9, 11 a.m. to noon at Unitarian Church; Thursday, Feb. 11, 1 to 2:30 p.m. at COA; and Thursday, Feb. 18, 1 to 2:30 p.m. at COA.

Links

The Links Program has been funded by W.R. Grace to "link" seventh and eighth grade students with elders needing yard cleanup, raking leaves, pet care, etc. Dennis Mecurio is the school student coordinator. All arrangements for doing and monitoring work will be made between senior students and their parents. Interested seniors should call June Brooks, Monday through Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 646-1000, Ext. 4720. She will pass the request to the school coordinator who will match seniors with students if they are available.

Storm cancellations

If Arlington public schools are closed due to inclement weather, Meals-on-Wheels will be cancelled. Please listen for announcements on your local radio stations, WBZ, WHDH, WEEI and WMJX.

SHINE hours change

COA health benefits counselors will be at the Council on Aging on Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., to provide free confidential assistance with questions on Medicare, MEDEX, health maintenance organizations, insurance claims forms, prescription drugs etc. To make an appointment, call 646-1000, ext. 4720.

Project Hire

If you are in need of a companion, homemaker or health aide and you live in Arlington or Lexington, contact June Brooks, at Project Hire/COA, at 646-1000, ext. 4720, Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 27 Maple St., Arlington.

Social services notes

If certain personal problems have you or a member of your family troubled, don't keep them to yourself. Outreach worker, Diane Tainter, a licensed social worker, can help you with short-term counseling, nursing and retirement homes, emotional dysfunction and the like. For more information, call Tainter at 646-1000, Ext. 4720.

Senior Citizens' Law Project

The Senior Citizens' Law Project of Cambridge and Somerville Legal

If you, for any reason, are unable to keep your appointment with SHINE, a call letting us know would be appreciated.

Minuteman Home Care

Eating Together meal site

Senior Center Luncheon Site, 27 Maple St.; Call site manager Marge Scott, 646-1000, Ext. 4747, for reservations and transportation. Drake Village Site, Hauser Bldg 37-Drake

Village Road; Call site manager Marilyn Brimo, at 648-7500, for reservations and transportation. Reservations are necessary. Menus may change without notice. Monday, Feb. 1, turkey chow mein with vegetables; Tuesday, Feb. 2, Swedish meatballs; Wednesday, Feb. 3, oven breaded chicken quarter; Thursday, Feb. 4, stuffed pepper; and Friday, Feb. 5, baked fish Florentine.

Drivers needed

Volunteers are needed for Meals-On-Wheels delivery, one hour per day, per week or per month. No number of hours is too small or too great. To set up a time to fit into your busy schedule, call the Council on Aging, at 646-1000, Ext. 4720.

It's tax time again

The Council on Aging is once again sponsoring the AARP TCE (Tax Counseling for the Elderly) program.

Trained volunteers will assist elders with filing their state and federal income tax returns.

The service will be provided starting Feb. 1 and ending April 15, at the following locations:

Monday: COA, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Tuesday: Calvary Methodist Church, from 9 a.m. to noon

Thursday: St. James Rectory, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Friday: COA, from 9 a.m. to noon

Appointments are not necessary but are recommended. Call the COA at 646-1000, Ext. 4720 for an appointment.

Independence after vision loss

On Friday, Feb. 5, at 12:45 p.m., there will be a presentation for seniors at the Arlington Senior Center, 27 Maple St. Donna Burt, a



Philip Canniff of the Arlington Council on Aging assists Arlington resident Pauline Kingman with the purchase of her new Dial-a-Ride card for 1993. The federally funded Dial-a-Ride program offers discounted taxi service for Senior Citizens and disabled persons within the town limits. Coupons may be purchased through the Council on Aging.

rehabilitation specialist, from the Perkins Outreach Service to Elders Program, will speak on "Maintaining Independence After Vision Loss."

All area seniors are invited to attend. This presentation is free and is sponsored by Arlington Guild For The Blind.

Diabetes seminar

The Council on Aging and Symmes Hospital is offering a seminar on diabetes on Wednesday, Feb. 24, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. at town hall Hearing Room, second floor. The program covers diet, exercise and skin care. Free blood sugar tests are offered at the end of the program. Call to register at 646-1000, Ext. 4720.

Dental screening

The Council on Aging will sponsor a dental screening on Feb. 18, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The examination will be conducted by Dr. James

Toyos.

Podiatry clinic

The monthly podiatry clinic will be held on Feb. 15, from 9 a.m. to noon, at COA, 27 Maple St. Dr. Daniel Seligman will provide an examination of the feet, nail cutting, and minor treatment of foot ailments. For Medicare recipients eligible for Medicare coverage, services will be billed to Medicare. Non-Medicare eligible services will be charged to patients at a rate of \$12 per visit.

For an appointment call 646-1000, Ext. 4720.

Representative Marzilli

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NEWS NOTES

Golden Age Club

David Pearson will show slides of the Tall Ships at the Golden Age meeting on Feb. 4, at the Pleasant Street Congregational Church, at 1:30 p.m.

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PUBLISHER: Asa Cole EXECUTIVE EDITOR: William Finucane
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The Arlington Advocate

COMMENT



The Birthplace of "Uncle Sam"

Samuel Wilson

Editorial

Hospitals and health

As David Speltz, President of Symmes Hospital, suggests in the Advocate interview this week, no hospital in America can hope to remain unaffected by the changes that are coming in the health care industry.

Washington will grapple over the coming year with the national government's role in the health care system — a spectre that inspires in reasonable people equal amounts of hope and dread. Meanwhile, hospitals in every community will look for new methods to stay in business. As we have seen in so many other sectors in the U.S. business world, this will probably mean more mergers, more consolidation, and some new corporate combinations. In health care, we will probably end up with fewer of the old-fashioned small-scale community hospitals.

Since last summer, when Symmes Hospital announced it was entering discussions with Lahey Clinic of Burlington, it has been no secret that changes are afoot at Arlington's only in-town hospital. Though no agreement on a Symmes-Lahey consolidation had been reached by our press time, a new partnership between these two institutions (and perhaps others) looks likely.

There's not much that average people can do when faced with economic forces that argue for larger corporate entities and chain ownership. But there is often a role for a community in influencing what kind of consolidation takes place and how the new businesses respond to the people they serve. Arlington has made it clear in the past that a locally oriented, small-scale hospital is important here. From what we can tell, the current management at Symmes is sensitive to these concerns. But there is no substitute for continued community involvement with the hospital and a continued dialogue between the management and the town's people.

Likewise in Washington. Without the continuing vigilance of the citizens who know what it is to struggle with unpayable hospital bills, there is no guarantee that "health care reform" will do what it needs to do.

The economic system that once provided a reasonable manner of insurance coverage for working people has come undone. As Speltz put it in our interview, "We don't have insurance in this country any more." Small businesses can't afford to pay the premiums for their workers, some large businesses have cut health benefits because they knew they could get away with it, and insurance companies have made a fine art out of avoiding coverage of anyone who might really need it.

It's simplistic to put the breakdown of the system on any one scapegoat. In a way, the change in employer-provided health benefits has to do with the fact that we no longer inhabit the post-World War II world, in which American companies were strong enough to offer continually better deals to their workers.

But what is obvious to anyone who is observing the shape of the battle to come in health care, is that there will be powerful economic interests that will steadfastly resist true reform: these are the insurance companies and the segments of the corporate health care world that are enjoying fat profits from a system that benefits the few.

The insurance companies and the drug companies are about to launch an all-out defense of the status quo, though they won't put it that way. They'll advertise and propagandize about "freedom of choice" and the magic of the marketplace. They'll play on our fears of new bureaucracy and new tax expenses.

But in the end their arguments will amount to this: keep the system as it is. In other words, continue to exclude those 30 to 40 million unfortunates who can't get on a health insurance plan. Continue to pay higher and higher costs for medical attention. Continue to bankrupt those individuals who get sick and run up bills they have no hope of paying.

Symmes chief David Speltz told us he thinks health care may turn out to be "Clinton's Vietnam." It's not hard to understand such fears — the new administration is faced with a truly daunting challenge. But if the war metaphor is apt, we might also say that just about everyone who has had anything to do with health care knows that the battle must now be joined.

Are we about to march into a quagmire? No. We're already in one.

GRANLUND MIDDLESEX NEWS



Symmes chief sees changing vistas

(Editor's note: In light of continued discussions between Symmes Hospital and other entities, including Lahey Clinic of Burlington, about the possibility of consolidation, the Advocate asked Symmes President and CEO David Speltz to discuss with us the issues affecting Symmes and the health care industry today. Following is a transcript of our interview, which was conducted Jan. 26 in Speltz's office at Symmes.)

THE ADVOCATE: The world of health care is changing around us. Has the health care world changed so much that there isn't much of a role anymore for small, traditional community hospitals?

SPELTZ: No. In fact, most of the hospitals in the United States today are community hospitals providing 80 to 85 percent of all the hospital care in this nation. These community hospitals provide not only the least expensive care for their communities but also they're closest to the communities, and in fact, very often through their boards of trustees they are owned and controlled by the communities. I don't see, certainly in the near future, America's communities giving up their

community hospitals to large megoliths.

Is there a trend now though toward hospital consolidation?

There is a trend toward consolidation. But it more often than not means community hospitals developing relationships with other hospitals, particularly larger hospitals, but retaining their community hospital integrity.

How's that being done — that they retain their community integrity?

They retain their own boards. They retain their own management. They retain their own medical staffs, they retain community programs. But through interlocking relationships they have developed affiliations with these other groups. And those can be in areas such as joint programs, joint purchasing, joint managed care projects. And they're all designed to bring services to community hospitals that they might not otherwise have.

What are some of the major trends right now in the changing health care picture that are making hospitals such as Symmes look at changes in

organizational structure?

Well, I think that there are three major changes that are taking place at the same time. The first is that whereas five years ago or ten years ago a patient might have to be admitted to a hospital overnight, they no longer have to be. So the hospital business is a shrinking business. The reason this has occurred is because of new drug therapies, new technologies, and practice patterns that permit a patient to be treated in a doctor's office or in an outpatient setting and be at home. With fewer patients staying overnight, fewer beds are needed. And both "business" and revenues are shrinking for hospitals.

The number of customers, so to speak, is dropping?

It's dropping. For everybody in the country. They're shifting to other less expensive ways, other forms of care. And that's appropriate. Because I believe that America has finally come to realize that there's a limit to what we can spend on health care. And these shifts are necessary if we are to bring balance back into our public spending — balance that appropriately allocates money to

health care, versus education, roads, and other areas.

There's another trend and that is that HMO's, or managed care, as it's called in the industry, have replaced traditional health care insurance plans. What HMO's do is they collect several hundred thousand patients under one umbrella and they negotiate for significant discounts in exclusive relationships with doctors and hospitals. We have seen that in the Boston area whereby one HMO will contract with only a third of the hospitals, promising that in return for major discounts they will not contract for the other two thirds. But in return, patients can no longer go to the doctors and hospitals they used to, and if you don't have those contracts it continues that decline in business.

Where does Symmes stand in that picture, as far as contracts with HMO's?

Symmes has many of the important contracts. But there are three that we currently do not have. And as people in our community join those contracts, they have to go to other hospitals.

INTERVIEW, See page 9A

Letters to the Editor

Anti-Drug workshop was well-attended

To the editor:

The Arlington Townwide PTO wishes to thank the elementary parents who took the time to attend the Freedom From Chemical Dependency workshop of Jan. 11. Over 60 people were present representing many of our schools. "Scoop" Crawford gave facts and practical parenting tips to help us work to keep our children drug and alcohol free. FCD still has funds available to provide additional fee workshops for interested groups or businesses. Additional information may be obtained by calling FCD at 444-6969.

**Judy Kocur,
Anna Reardon,
Co-presidents
Townwide PTO**

hurtful to anyone who is not a member of the majority.

The controversy is not only about the Christmas display. How we resolve this issue will send a message year-round about our community's level of tolerance and respect for each other. We hope that the composition of the committee designated by the Board of Selectmen will reflect the town's diversity and reinforce a commitment to religious, ethnic and racial sensitivity.

**Sharman Nathanson
Larry and Judi Bohn
Sharon Grossman
Nancy Barry
Harris and Carol Band
Sara Balderston
Sharon Dyer
Carmen Torres and Kenny House
Elaine Dyer Tarquinio
Phyllis Warren**

have enjoyed each others' company and have many happy memories.

I feel sure, if you would have this attitude instead of harboring a barrier of bigotry, you would find the world a much friendlier and happier place to live.

John M. Wilfert Jr.
Windmill Lane

Minority prejudice

To the editor:

Thank you for publishing the many letters that so strongly support retaining the traditional manger in Arlington Center. I, too, am very much opposed to giving in to malcontent minority prejudice in this community matter. Should it be said that after 2,000 years of Christianity there is no longer any room at the inn?

Could the Advocate publish a question on this topic, so that readers could have an opportunity to express their preference?

Bodo Reichenbach
Vista Circle

originally designed, the trail is to have two layers of pavement, but only one has been put down so far. In order to prevent damage to the surface, the final layer of pavement will be the very last step in construction. This layer will bring the pavement level up to the edge of the rows of stone blocks that were installed last fall.

The stone blocks are designed to warn bicyclists of approaching intersections or other hazards on the trail. Bicyclists riding with "racing" (down) handlebars instead of "mountain" or "city" (up) handlebars might not see the approach of an intersection as easily and thus need the warning. The stone blocks provide what is known as a "rumble strip" which causes a brief "roughness" similar to the ridges in the pavement in a toll plaza that warn automobile drivers of an upcoming toll booth. They make a sound and provide a gentle vibration but do not damage to the bicycle or rider.

Confusion about the trail has probably resulted from the fact that the ribbon-cutting last October took place before the actual completion of construction. This occurred because of changes in the construction schedule made after the ribbon-cutting (an event of nationwide importance) had already been set up.

Other questions or comments about the Minuteman Trail should be directed to the planning department in town hall. However, please bear with us while construction is completed.

Glenn Koenig

(The author is currently working on a video documentary of the Minuteman Trail which is due to be completed some time this year.)

For diversity and tolerance

To the editor:

The current debate about the nativity scene on public land offers a healthy opportunity to discuss diversity, community values, and tolerance. Unfortunately, many statements made have been bitter and divisive.

Of particular concern is the petition signed by nine residents, including two School Committee members, which asserted that since the "majority" of people in Arlington are Christian, the nativity scene should remain. That a complex issue can be so cavalierly reduced to the simplistic assertion that majority rules is extremely disturbing and

amazes me how anyone could move into a town a couple of months ago and already want to change things.

I am a Christian, but many of my friends and business associates are of the Jewish faith. We have vacationed with Jewish friends, had them stay at our home, stayed in their homes and never have had a hostile or uncomfortable feeling. We

Update on the Minuteman Trail

To the editor:

This letter is written to answer Nicholas Newell (who wrote a letter in last week's Advocate) and anyone else concerned about the Minuteman Trail. Please be advised that although the name does not say "bikeway" any longer, bicycles are still quite welcome.

First, construction of the Minuteman Trail is not completed. Work has stopped over the winter because of the snow and frozen ground. As

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COMMENT

A community hospital in a changing world

INTERVIEW, From page 8A

*So it's another trend that is shifting customers away from this particular hospital.**It's a trend that is shifting customers from one hospital that they've been used to, to other hospitals. It is affecting virtually every hospital in the country. And certainly in this area of Massachusetts.**Given these factors, then, is it a logical conclusion that America has too many hospitals?**I think it is a logical conclusion that over the next several years America has too many (hospital) beds. Whether it has too many hospitals is a more complicated question: that depends upon whether those hospitals are located in areas where a hospital, in fact, is needed. It's more than beds. It's emergency rooms, it's ambulatory care... but I don't think there's any doubt that there are far too many beds in this nation, and too many beds in Massachusetts.**Where does Symmes fit into that? Is Symmes seen as a hospital that may not be absolutely necessary in this location?**No. I think that the community decided back in 1990 during its bankruptcy that this hospital was needed in this community. The question is, what should Symmes look like over the next several years? We know that the emergency room is critical to this area. We know that over the next several years that a significant number of the beds that exist at Symmes will continue to be used. But we also know that there is a part of Symmes that over time will no longer be used. And what we're doing now is planning for converting those resources to a new way of health care — ambulatory care.**In general terms when we talk about hospital consolidation, is there a potential there for small hospitals becoming part of large corporate hospitals and perhaps losing their community touch?**The answer is yes. When smaller hospitals develop relationships with larger hospitals — and this is something that is going on nationwide — great care has to be taken to ensure that the integrity of that community hospital is maintained. And in the negotiations that do take place, that we don't forget that fundamental need.**You mentioned earlier some of the things that Symmes will be doing in the future to continue to serve the community in this changing landscape. Can we elaborate on a few of those strategies?**There are probably three areas that people in our community will over the next decade have a significant need in services: They are in cancer, heart disease, and the third is sort of general, and that is those diseases that affect the elderly. At this point, we are concentrating our efforts on further enhancing the services that we provide in those areas.**How does the hospital address the income question and the cost question? This hospital specifically — how can Symmes continue to make a go of it financially?**First of all, over the last two years we've done rather well financially. And that is in spite of the fact that for three years we have had no increase in reimbursement and have lived on the same income in 1993 that we had in 1991. There is a question as to how you can continue doing that over a long period of time. And we believe that there are two things that we need to do to adapt to that reality.**(And incidentally I would say that with Bill Clinton becoming President that the probability of even further cuts in health care payments are on the horizon.) The first is that, at least in my view, that nationwide we have a vast amount of money being spent on administrative overhead that could be eliminated by changing how health care is paid for.**There are a couple ways to deal with that. We have control over one. The best solution is to have a national plan that eliminates the redundant billing systems and the chaos that exists in the health care payment and insurance system.**What kind of national plan might do that?**I don't know. I think that there are a lot of plans on the table and what we are going to see over the next year is a great deal of debate over what plan makes sense.... That is not a solution that is within our (Symmes') control. There is another one that is within our control, and that is to develop a relationship with other hospitals so that we combine these operations that are still needed today and we do it in ways that are less expensive because it's being done in a consolidated fashion.**What kind of relationships with*

Symmes President David Speltz standing next a GE CAT-scan machine, one of the hospital's newest acquisitions.

other hospitals?

rehabilitation centers that are small, relatively invisible and doing extremely well.

The Symmes annual report makes a connection between the effort nationally to find a workable system of health care and what Symmes and small community hospitals are doing in their own neighborhood. What kind of connection is there?

That is one of the options that Symmes is now considering?

We have no choice but to look at how we can continue to reduce the cost of providing health care to our community. I'd like to add that if you were to examine the cost of Symmes hospital against other hospitals in the state that we are amongst the lowest as it is right now. And so we probably have gone a long way and are probably ahead of many other hospitals in bringing those costs down. But we have a long way to go.

The second is that we are today working more closely than ever with the other providers in our neighborhoods, including home care, nursing homes, town government, to understand the issues better and how together we might be able to deal with some of these cost and access

issues.

A number of times you've mentioned cooperation between hospitals and yet so much of the at least the previous administration's answer when it comes to health care has been to talk in terms of the market, the free market, in terms of competition. So is there something going on here with so much cooperation that it could in fact turn uncompetitive?

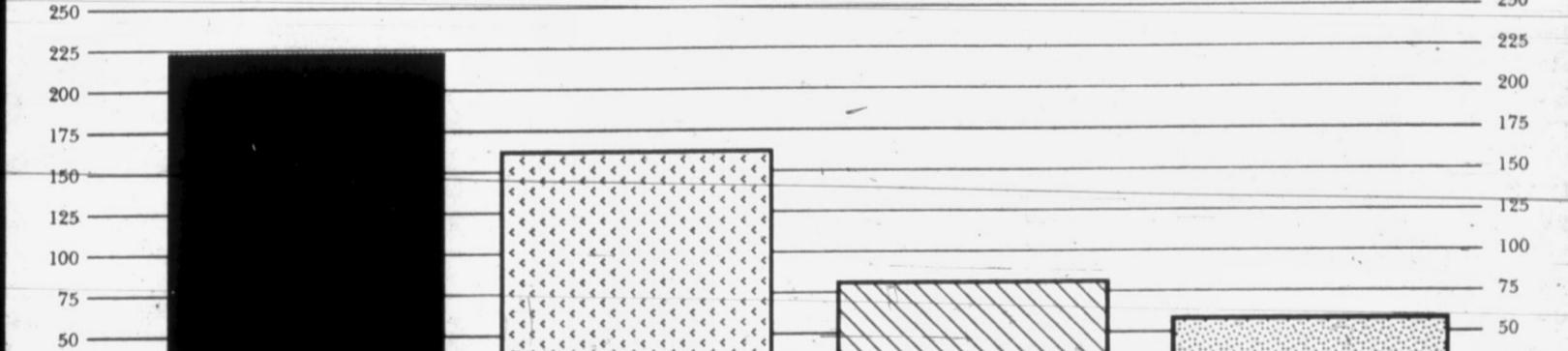
Well, I think that there are two connections there. The first I've already mentioned. And that is that, although Symmes has cut the fat off the edge of the steak, there is still some marbled fat that comes from the way the system is designed. And what we can do is to work with our neighboring hospitals to develop economies of scale to take out some of that marbled fat.

The second is that we are today

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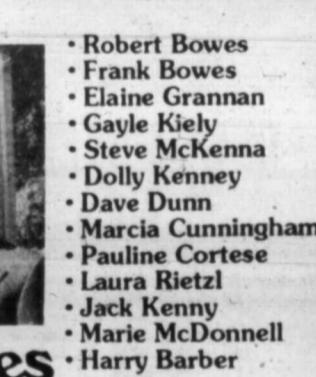
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ELECTION NEWS

Delaney seeks 2nd school committee term

(The following is a statement released Jan. 22 by School Committee candidate Douglas Delaney.)

This week, Douglas J. Delaney announced his bid for re-election for a second, and final, term on the Arlington School Committee. He and his wife, Vicki, are the parents of two children at the Dallin School — Max, 9, and Marjorie, 8. Delaney works as a management consultant for Syncetics Inc. in Cambridge.

Delaney has applied his professional experience during the last three years by demonstrating an open-minded approach to solutions, encouraging compromise and helping the committee to view all sides of an issue before coming to a conclusion. Delaney believes that, "Good information, a reasoned approach to decision-making, and a recommendation from the superintendent, help

the School Committee make the right choices for the children of Arlington."

As a member of the School Committee, Delaney has been a strong proponent of accountability. He has proven his resolve by working hard for a formal, written evaluation instrument for the superintendent of schools despite initial resistance from other committee members. "How can we, as principals and department heads, evaluate staff in a thorough and consistent manner if we are not adhering to the same rigorous evaluation process at the top," explains Delaney.

In addition, Delaney has supported and worked diligently for an independent audit of school finances and the current town-wide committee looking at school-building renovation. He says, "I think these two

studies will give the school department and the town leaders both a better understanding of how to plan for the future of education in Arlington and the tools to accomplish the task. Our school children benefit when we all work together."

The next several years offer a number of challenges for our school system, such as: grade reorganization; changing high school graduation requirements; decreased local aid; and contract negotiations. The pending educational reform legislation could provide many in the system with an opportunity to retire. In Delaney's view, "Selecting new professional staff members with vision and clearly articulated goals will define the future successes or failures of our school system."

As a management consultant, Delaney has helped school systems and corporations across the country manage change by creating new directions or developing new strategies for the future. This experience gives him a personal appreciation for what it will take for Arlington's schools to leverage its strengths and create new approaches in education.

Delaney clarifies, "The fiscal destiny of Arlington requires that we break down the walls between the town and the schools. For example, we should examine streamlining our school budgeting process, look at sharing services within the town and through regional partnerships with other school systems. I was a member of the Vision 2020 Steering Committee



Douglas Delaney

— the town's long-range planning committee — and co-chair of the Vision 2020 Communications Task Group, and these are illustrations of visioning that needs to be done to accomplish our goals."

In seeking re-election to a second term, Delaney is not planning on a career on the Arlington School Committee. "I believe it takes a term to fully reach your potential as a productive committee member, and the second term gives a member the optimal opportunity to make use of one's experience, energy and have an even greater impact managing in these difficult times. I will work hard this term and not seek re-election for a third term. Thank you for the opportunity you gave me to serve on the School Committee. I ask for one of your three votes on Saturday, March 6."

(Douglas J. Delaney lives at 377 Appleton St. and can be reached at 646-6925.)

Schlichtman running to improve schools

(The following announcement was submitted on January 15 by Paul Schlichtman, a candidate for school committee.)

"It's a nice place to live, but you wouldn't want to send your kids to the public schools." This reputation is often the kiss of death for a community, and Arlington is rapidly heading in that direction, according to Paul Schlichtman, who announced his candidacy for the school committee today.

"I am running for the school committee because I am disturbed by the lack of confidence many people have in the future of the public schools. As I talk to many friends and neighbors in town, I keep hearing the same things. People are moving out of town, or sending their children to private schools, because they lack confidence in our ability to deliver a quality public education." This lack of confidence in the schools, Schlichtman explained, leads to an erosion of property values and eventually to the destruction of the quality of life of a community.

Schlichtman said that Arlington's problems have not escaped the notice of impartial observers. On many objective measures, Arlington's public schools compare poorly with neighboring districts. In the September, 1992 edition of Boston Magazine, Eastern Massachusetts communities were rated on a variety of measures. While Arlington was found to have excellent shopping and recreation, the district earned a zero rating for commitment to public education. Arlington's rating was the worst in our area. (To compare, Brookline and Lexington earned a rating of 4, while Medford and Somerville didn't do very well but surpassed Arlington with a rating of 1.)

Boston Magazine isn't alone in its assessment of the schools. Public Schools USA, which rates metropolitan area school systems across the country, is a resource frequently used by home buyers who are choosing a community in which to live. The book computes an "Effective Schools Index" for 20 Boston metropolitan area districts, and Arlington is near the bottom. Arlington earned only 42 out of a possible 90 points, and was trailed only by Somerville (40) and Lynn (34). In both the Boston Magazine and Public Schools USA ratings, Arlington scored lower than the cities of Boston and Cambridge.

"Finishing behind Lexington and Brookline is no disgrace, but we now find ourselves competing with Somerville for the educational basement. This is a tragedy because a losing school system destroys the futures of our children and our entire community."

Schlichtman has 19 years of experience with the issues of community schools. As a reporter and editor of weekly newspapers on Long Island, he was responsible for reporting on seven large school systems. "I have been to more school committee meetings than most veteran committee members. I have seen school committees that have delivered excellence in times of adversity, and I have seen committees that have destroyed their systems with mindless cuts and petty bickering. Yes, times are tough right now, but I believe we can all work together to improve our schools and create a system that will adequately prepare our children for the 21st century."

After seven years in local journalism, Schlichtman's interest in education

Paul Schlichtman

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After seven years in local journalism, Schlichtman's interest in education

ELECTION, See page 11A

Election policy

- The Advocate welcomes press releases or position papers from candidates for the annual town election on March 6.
- Each candidate will be allowed one printed statement (two typewritten double-spaced pages) before the election. That statement may be accompanied by a photograph.
- The Advocate will also publish the annual League of Women Voters' election guide in February.
- No candidates' releases will be accepted for the March 4 issue. The Advocate editorial page will discuss candidates and issues in the Feb. 25 issue.

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